

threaten in any way the delivery of community based mental health programs. In my opinion, one of the most serious problems that we face in the community based mental health programs is a lack of funding. And that requires, in my opinion, that we should use the funds that are available in the community based mental health programs as efficiently and effectively as possible. To me, that means that we should not waste money on rent and what is occurring in Norfolk, Nebraska is in my mind, a terrible waste of money. We have beautiful facilities on the campus at Norfolk. I would invite any of you to go there and look at the Norfolk Regional Center. There are adequate facilities there to meet the needs of the community based mental health program as well as the State hospital. Despite that, the community based mental health program desires to be in the more plush, nice office space downtown next to the private hospital. The reason for that, I think is simple. They can rent much nicer space there. It's in a much nicer part of town. It's more accessible. I mean, all of us would rather be in a office building with a fountain than one out in the older community based mental health program. But that doesn't mean what they have been doing there is correct. I think it's very improper. One of the advantages of having the community based mental health program moved back to the campus at Norfolk is that there would be more coordination between a psychiatrist and the other medical professionals at the hospital and those in the community based program.

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR CULLAN: There has not been good coordination between those entities in the past and that's one of the most serious problems we have faced with the delivery of mental health services in northeast Nebraska. So it's clear to me that by bringing those two entities back in the same building, we will save substantial amount of money on rent. The rent will be paid to a political subdivision so that it's...or back to the State of Nebraska from a political subdivision so it's not wasting money on rent. It will be cheaper to them initially and finally, it's going to result in a more coordinated delivery system for services in that area, one which is going to help patients in northeast Nebraska and that should be the goal of every member in the Legislature. I urge you to support LB 583 so that we can accomplish this objective. The one last point I would make very quickly is that Senator Peterson and I invited the Board of Directors of the County Commissioners who run the mental health program in northeast Nebraska to come down here and talk about it, talk to us about this issue.

PRESIDENT: Term's expiring.